

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING NEIL F. OBERTO ON BEING NAMED "OUTSTANDING ITALIAN AMERICAN"

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 14, 2003

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Neil Oberto for being named the "Outstanding Italian American" by the Hazleton Sons of Italy. It is an honor to join the members of this organization in paying tribute to his numerous achievements as he is honored at the Columbus Day Ceremony on Sunday, October 12th.

Neil Oberto is the third of four sons born to Anthony and Immaculata (Lombardi) Oberto. He was born and raised in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, and has lived there for most of his life. Neil exhibited leadership qualities early on in his life. He is a 1978 graduate of Hazleton High School where he served as the senior class president. He also attended Luzerne County Community College obtaining an Associate Degree in 1980 in Hotel and Restaurant Management, and was employed at a several restaurants and hotels throughout the area.

In 1982, Neil took a new direction in his life when he attended Borromeo College of Ohio, a seminary college outside of Cleveland to pursue his bachelor's degree and discern the option of joining the Capuchin Franciscans. He obtained a Bachelor's degree two years later in Social and Behavioral Science. In his senior year of college he was accepted as a postulant with the Capuchins. From 1984–1985, he spent a novitiate year with the Capuchins at their novitiate house outside of Pittsburgh.

He returned to Hazleton in August of 1985. Neil pursued a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Scranton and achieved that goal in 1991. He is a Nationally Board Certified Counselor and Licensed as a Professional Counselor.

Mr. Speaker, Neil Oberto has been working and volunteering in the social service field for the past 24 years. He began working with mentally challenged adults and children in recreational programs. While in Cleveland he did various apostolic and volunteer work with inner city youth, pastoral care in hospitals, and an inner city nursing facility for the economically underprivileged, along with other inner city service. In Pittsburgh, apostolic work was at a soup kitchen in the "Hill District" and hospital pastoral work. Upon his return to Hazleton he was employed at the Keystone Job Corp Center as a Residential Advisor, Luzerne County Children and Youth as a caseworker, and since 1989, Catholic Social Services of Greater Hazleton. He has been serving as Executive Director since 1995.

Neil Oberto is very involved in his community. He is involved or has had past affiliation with the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference Adoption Committee, Greater Hazleton Civic Partnership, United Way Child Advocacy Committee, Hazleton Area Housing Coalition, Co-

Founder Habitat for Humanity, Tri-Area Joint Recreation Authority, Cranberry Creek Gateway Committee, Keystone Job Corp Center Community Relations Committee, numerous regional and state commitments through work, and a lector, catechism teacher and member of the Holy Name Society at Our Lady of Grace Church in Hazleton.

Neil has been awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the Greater Hazleton Jaycees and was presented with a Leadership Award from Project Women in Need by State Representative Katie True.

He is married to the former Meralea Petrucci and is the proud father of four daughters, Danielle, Gina, Sara and Kristina.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and honor to represent a man who is not only a leader in the Hazleton Community, but someone who has devoted his life to helping those who are less fortunate.

TRIBUTE TO EUREKA LODGE NO. 52

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 14, 2003

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exceptional institution within my community, the Eureka Lodge No. 52, and to congratulate its members on reaching an exceptional milestone. Soon these men will celebrate the lodge's tradition of 100 years of dedication to their community and to each other.

From its humble beginnings in a barber shop in New Jersey, a group of men, led by Hodges Ford, sought to begin a Masonic Lodge in Montclair. The barber, Brother Joseph Hooper, joined these men, guiding their vision, and helping them to establish what is now Eureka Lodge No. 52.

The first lodge was founded on December 5, 1903, in Bloomfield, not Montclair, as there was no available hall to be found there. On January 22, 1904, Eureka Lodge No. 52 held its first meeting at Arab Hall, with 18 members—3 more than the minimum requirement of 15. In December of 1909, the Lodge was rewarranted and moved to Montclair at the request of the officers and members.

Thus began their many years of service to the community, remaining faithful to their claim that they are "founded upon unity and brotherly love."

The Eureka Lodge celebrated its 50th anniversary on December 3, 1953, at the Ivanhoe Inn in Irvington, NJ.

On November 21, 1965, the Lodge reached what it considers to be the pinnacle of their achievements—the laying of the cornerstone in their \$50,000 Masonic Building. This building has become a source of pride for its members and the people within the community as it continues to be a meeting place for an affiliation with a long and distinguished past,

proudly claiming 3 of its members as Most Worshipful Grand Masters.

I hope that you will all join me in congratulating the men of Eureka Lodge No. 52, whose members, both past and current, have been devoted to fraternity, fellowship, and service to their community.

THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 14, 2003

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to join my colleagues on the Hill in wishing the Republic of China a happy National Day, which occurred last Friday. Despite Taiwan's small size and lack of natural resources, in recent years Taiwan has emerged as an economic powerhouse. It is the world's 17th largest economy, with the world's 15th largest trade volume. This economic performance has contributed to both regional and global prosperity. At a time of economic interdependence among nations, Taiwan has a lot to offer to the world. On Taiwan's National Day, I would like to see Taiwan continue to play a major economic role in the world and further strengthen its economic ties to the United States. Indeed, bilateral trade between Taiwan and the U.S. topped \$66 billion last year and will continue to grow—to the benefit of both nations. Congratulations, President Chen. We wish you and your people the best of luck as you seek readmission to the United Nations and the World Health Organization. You deserve a prominent place on the world stage. I also wish to add that President Chen has pledged Taiwan's resources in helping us fight worldwide terrorism. President Chen believes any attack on America is tantamount to an attack on Taiwan and all the other peace-loving countries in the world. Terrorism must be stopped and Taiwan has done its best to help eliminate terrorism worldwide. We appreciate Taiwan's support.

CONGRATULATING THE BOROUGH OF DUNMORE ON RECEIVING RECOGNITION FOR THEIR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT EVENTS

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 14, 2003

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Borough of Dunmore, in Lackawanna County, PA, for being nationally recognized once again for its National Night Out Events. I ask that my colleagues pay tribute to Dunmore, its citizens, Police Chief Sal Mecca and Mayor Patrick Loughney for winning this National recognition.

This year, Dunmore was named the second best event nationally in the under 15,000 population category. I was proud to participate in

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